

**Athletic Council
February 2, 2023**

Attendance: Diane Barstow (co-chair), Linda Griffin (co-chair), Rebecca Spencer, Kirsten Britton, Steve Bobbitt, Kirstin Kay, Ed Ward, Bob Goodhue, Tim Anderson, Chris Brady (SGA)

1. Approval of the minutes from Dec 9 (approved)

2. Guest speaker – Steve Bobbitt (director of Campus Rec)

- Introduced himself, background in rec (his mom was an influence as a 3-sport athlete), considers himself an adventure person, 2 kids (one doing campus rec @ Towson)
- Campus rec – under campus wellness (under Betsy Cracco)
- Rec Center gets ~4000 visits/day; 800,000/year, 110 classes/week, working with sports clubs and intramurals (1800 participants, 47 clubs)
- Goal setting: 14,000 students x 3 visits per/week = 42000 visits (and that is just on-campus students) which the center can't handle.
- Center for Health Promotion is being absorbed into Rec. Name change to Recreation and Wellbeing.
- Hired architects to plan long-term growth of space. Working with SGA and other focus groups to get feedback.
- Developing UMass adventure programming: enhance the outcoming club to a professional level. Trip programs, wilderness orientation programs, enhance gear rentals, ropes course (possibly by the disc golf course), enhance trail programs on campus, bring Mountain Day back, facility reno includes hand-me-downs from football. Outdoor enhancements to make the Boyden fields more park-like.
- The Fieldstone building will have bouldering wall which has been too much demand for current facilities. Will have instruction, drop-in climbing, competitions, and rentals.
- Club programs in SGA v. campus rec. Campus rec advises them currently but don't see them as a unit. With the move, can improve athletic training and transportation.

3. Guest speaker – Don Brown (head football coach)

- Shared his coaching background: Defense Coordinator at University of Arizona and Michigan. Was at UMass 1998-1999 as Defense Coordinator with Mark Whipple and 2004-2008 as Head Coach.
- Has children and grandchildren within 2 hour radius of campus so the move back to Amherst was even more appealing.
- Football Roster – 71 scholarship players; when the season ended 2 years ago, the roster was in the mid-60's; faced challenges academically and with the transfer portal. Need to get back to 75 to have a full roster.
- Recruiting - Made mistake recruiting without input from players; leadership and confidence needs to come from within the team; youngest team; recently had 7-8 high school players sign.

- The past season, the team was plagued with injuries – quarterback and running backs.
- Current Roster – 70% turnover from last year to this year; working to build team with young, middle, and older players, which is a real positive; put a layer of older players who know how to practice and play at the college level; have signed 4 receivers.
- 2023 schedule – Auburn had a head coach transition; PennState will be a challenge; Army is after a bye week so will have time to prep.
- Optimistic about offense with new players; was ranked #129 in defense when adopted team.
- Team is only as good as the coaching personnel.
- Spring practice is March 28-April 28; 3x/week for 5 weeks.
- Recently started winter workouts; great use for mental aspect.
- Before you win games, need to get in them.
- Question asked about academics – Has been a challenge; need to recruit players that have the potential to be successful; need to take care of business in the classroom.

4. Subcommittee Updates

- Reminder for subcommittees to meet.
- Deadlines for reports will be forthcoming.

5. Athletics Department Update (Kirsten Britton on behalf of Ryan Bamford)

- Students are back; very long break for athletes being on campus, especially the lack of students at games.
- Swimming/Diving at the A10 Championships next week.
- Hockey – bumps in the road this year; series against Vermont this weekend.
- Men's Basketball – injuries to the top two players; resulting in fewer successes.
- Women's Basketball – 20 wins; currently 2nd in conference with 5 weeks to go.
- Softball – season starts today; two challenging opponents in tournament.
- M/W Track – final stretch to the A10 championships
- Tennis – only have 6 of 8 players; have had to forfeit some matches.
- Lacrosse – kicks off tomorrow.
- Crew and Baseball – starts the beginning of March.
- Football – as Coach Brown shared, recruiting is the priority, especially offensively.
- Facilities – renovations to football; Boyden Gym – weight room, fueling stations, first phase of locker room for rowing (schedule future tour for council); Cage – design phase for track & field performance center.
- Student Athlete Development – DEI initiatives; activities for Black History Month; series for Mental Health Awareness.
- Finance/Budget – Sean Quinn accepted a position at UCLA Davis; search for the Associate AD for Finance.
- NCAA – looking to the future landscape of D1.

6. Old Business

- None

7. New Business

- May 4 – presentation to Faculty Senate; deadline for subcommittee reports forthcoming; Teams folder is active and contains copies of last year's reports.

Meeting adjourned at 11:20 am; motion by Bob Goodhue, seconded by Ed Ward.